D1662 A 12

A DISCOVERY OF THEISME.

TOGETHER,

With such Philosophical and Mathematical Observations, as are Consonant thereunto: Deliver'd in a more refin'd Manner then hitherto Written, against *Atheisme*, and *Prophaness*.

——Deum namque ire per omnes
Terrarum tractusque maris cælumque profundum.
Virgil.

By a Person of Quality.

London, Printed for *Charles Brome*, at the *Gun*, at the West-end of St. *Pauls*. 1698.

A DISCOVERY OF THEISME.

TOGETHER,

With such Philosophical and Mathematical Observations, as are Conducing thereunto: Delivered in a more refin'd Manner than hitherto Written, against Atheisme, and Prophaneness.

——Deum namque ire per omnes
Terrasque tractusque maris cœlumque profundum.
Virgil.

By a Person of Quality.

London, Printed for Charles Brome, at the Gun, at the West-end of St. Paul's. 1698.

THE THEIST, TO THE READER.

WHosoever shall peruse the Ensuing Treatise, will, I doubt not, to his Satisfaction, perceive that there is deliver'd in a more Excellent and refin'd manner such Tenents as are genuinely appropriated to the sublime Devotion of the Soul

by the definition of Theisme; *and this perform'd in divers undeniable Instances and Proofs, that have not been the Subject of any precedent Pen. For tho it be granted that divers have Written on the Subject of* Theisme, *yet the Method they have us'd in Publishing the Substance, in their Opinions, of that Perswasion, has been rather in the Nature of a Common-place, in every of their Writings, then duely Exhibiting the manifest perspicuity of that Doctrine as it is evident to the best Eye of Humane Understanding.*

And thus they would seem to apprehend that the Theist *does rather superficially Ruminate on the Notion and Being of a* God, *(tho visibly convey'd to the Intellect by the sublime Conduct of Providence together with the many wonderful Existencies and Beings of things apparently discern'd in the Compass of the Universe,) then pertinently adore the* Deity *in all those considerations: As if miraculous Objects did not necessitate the Reverence and Devotion of the Humane Soul, unless there be an Inadvertency and Negligence by not Em-*

phatically regarding the Conviction display'd by the Almighty to every reasonable Comprehension.

He must be endu'd with a very Insipid Sense, that beholds a miraculous Structure without acknowledging an extraordinary Operator: And much more of a dimme discernment, if by the Fabrick of the Universe he did not conclude its Contexture devinely Admirable: All which is so generally granted, that it has the validity of a proverbial Truth, on all sides, rather then the least Admittance of Dispute or Quere:

But

But with this difference, that whereas others deduce, on the same account, their belief from words, which they consider as Dictates from above, the Theist *derives his from the Works of the Omnipotent; so that there cannot be any Essential misunderstanding, in that Particular, betwixt him, and any of his Opposers.*

If some Professions of Faith undertake to define the Essence of the Deity *more positively then is Consistent with his Creed. (As they endeavour by Sophisticate Terms or Words of Art to exert the Infinite Pro-*

prieties and Being of the Omnipotent, which cannot be applicable to the Humane Understanding as it is conversant with Objects of Sense, or things of a Corporeal Nature.)

Notwithstanding the Theist *does not deny, but in the Soul of Man there may be, in some respects, a very sublime* Idea *of an unlimitted Capacity or extent, as from the most spiritual part of Thought it has a momentary Progression: And this is experimentally certain whensoever the Imagination shall by an Instant Thought conceive a Geometrical Line extended*

extended farther then all quantative Limitation in any kind: Much like that of Euclid, *where he defines an Infinite line Incommensurably reaching beyond all figurative Height, or Length; of which more at large in that part of this Treatise that relates to the Orbs above.*

Wherefore, if the Doctors of the Schools mean no other, by the Definition of the Deity, however worded by them, then the most supereminent Attributes of an Infinite Being, in all Capacities, there is no occasion for controverting that Point betwixt the Theist *and them.*

them. Nor ought they to forget, where it is Written, that God *deliver'd himself to Moses by no other Epithite then* I am, what I am, *which does not only pose, but check Mortality that would undertake to explicate the Divine Essence, beyond what is possible, to be comprehended by Mankind. Which the precedent expression of* I am, what I am, *so stupendously transcending the utmost reach of Humane Sense, does undeniably assure us. But of this sublime Notion, more fully in the subsequent Treatise.*

Next

Next to the Being of a Deity, *there ought to be a reverend acknowledgement of the miraculous Impart and Munificence in the Conduct of Divine Providence, which in the Judgment of the* Theist, *is conspicuously discernable in the Whole, and every Part of the Universe; and so very apparent, that it does by its constant Visibility avert the considerate Man from having his Understanding diversly perplex'd, or envelop'd by the obscurity of Traditional or Related Miracles, of which he can have no sensible prospect.*

As

As may be compendiously perceiv'd by perusing this Book; where not only the actual Wonders of Providence are treated more applicably Intelligible, then has as yet been observ'd in the Writtings of others. But also some things of high concern, or not before discover'd, no less manifestly prov'd by Mathematical certainty: Yet so perform'd, that it is made sensibly demonstrative to any Reader who is not experienc'd in that Science. Some there are that Ignorantly enough undertake to accuse Theisme, *as if it oppos'd all Reveall'd Worship:*

Worship: Notwithstanding that the External Convictions of Providence are inseparable from his Belief; but this Reflection, as the Theist *apprehends, does proceed from such who contend more for the Credit of the Intricacy of their Doctrines, or Metaphysical Distinctions, then the open Motives of Faith, that ought to Illuminate their Conceptsons: From whence it is very Remarkable, that Men Bigotted by Imaginary Notions, or accustom'd to a careless and sloathful Regard of the manifest Convictions expos'd by the* Almighty *in the Wonders of his Works, do live, as if they discern'd not, or were surfeited with the continual Blessings that Providence, the great Lieutenant of the* Deity, *bestows, as Comforts to their Souls and Bodies, by Day and Night upon them.*

Others

Others there are, tho agreeing with the Theist *in their Acknowledging and Worshiping of a sole* Deity: *Yet are severely Imbitter'd against him, because he does not tack to his Belief such a Catalogue of Articles of Faith, as each of them profess annex'd to their Creed.*

In Answer to which, the Theist *desires them to Consider, that they are so far from accomodating, betwixt themselves their different Manner of Worships, together with divers essential Particulars by which they depart farther from one another then they can pretend to do from the Doctrine of* Theisme: *As is clearly preceptible in the* Jew, Mehometan, *and other perverse Beliefs: Yet all of them Concenter with the* Theist *in the Adoration of one sole* God: *Which enough does manifest that the Belief of one* God *is the*

most

most demonstrative Article of their several Perswasions: As also that their Dissentments, Enmities, and violent Oppositions, in Reference to the uncertainties of other of their Tenents, even to the Subverting of Civil Repose, and Government, may be Recorded amongst the highest Calamities of Mankind.

But on these sad Accounts, so notoriously known, the Theist *is more modest then to Insert his Recriminations.*

And thus in Brief, are here presented, by way of Preface, such Sentiments of the Theist *as preparatively Conduce to the facilitating of the Readers Apprehension of the ensuing Work: Which is chiefly design'd against the absur'd Impieties of* Atheisme, *with a due Reflection on such that disregard, in Soul, the Miracles of the* Almighty *as*

so

so many Innumerable Blessings throughout the Universe conveyd, for the benefit of Mankind.

To Conclude, the *Reader* is desir'd to take Notice, that there is nothing Intended, in this *Treatise*, whereby to Lessen in any kind, the Excellencies of *Christian Religion*, but rather an Acknowledgment of its Divine Perfections, as may be evidently perceiv'd in the Close of the ensuing Book.

A DISCOVERY

Of the most Refin'd

NOTIONS and PRINCIPLES

Of the

THEIST.

As they Essentially Relate to that

PERSWASION.

THE Religion of the *Theist*, as the Word may be deriv'd from *Greek*, Consists in the sole belief of one God, with all other Attributes of miraculous Being, Providence, and Con-

duct, that can be assign'd to Omnipotency. In which general Article of Divine Belief, the *Theist* fully concenters with the most Universal Religions of the World: But in the motives to Divine Worship, he considerably differs from many of them, which may be thus explain'd: The *Theist* derives his Adoration of a Deity, from the Being and miraculous Order of the Universe in the Existency of the World above, and below, with whatsoever is contain'd therein, which summ'd compleats the Proposition of God demonstrated by the wonders of his Works, which he believes ought undeniably to oblige the Holy reverence of the Soul as the most visible convictions of his Creed: Or no other then so many Divine Proposals

posals in the miraculous operations and consistency of the World sensibly apprehended by the admirable conduct of the Almighty. If he beholds the miraculous Revolution above, together with the rising and setting of the Sun to day, he thinks it no less stupendious if he perceives his Glorious Ascent to morrow: And thus he fits his belief to the Volume of Divine Faith comprehended in the Worlds universal Continuance and Being, as so many Evidences of the Deity convey'd by Incomprehensible Causes and Effects. In which submission of the Soul, he cannot but seperate his Holy contemplation and reverence from other Credentials of Worship that are written, or dispers'd by the Hand of Man, as he that has an

open assurance, need not uncloſe a Book to ſearch for more; becauſe a writing however credibly aſſerting the Truth of Miracles paſt, which celebrate particular Worſhips, cannot as he Judgeth, be ſo preſent with his Underſtanding, or his Immediate Conviction, as what is perpetual to his Apprehenſion, in the miraculous Conſtitution, Preſervation, and Providential management of the Univerſal World, with the innumerable Objects of Admiration contain'd in it, that does, as it were, diſcloſe to the Eye the boſome of Omnipotence; in which the devout preception of Man may diſcern dateleſs Miracles no leſs Antient in Being then the total World; becauſe always evident in it. Whereas contrarily, in the Judgment

ment of the *Theist*, other Religious Perswasions want not only the like continual manifest Convictions; but according to the known Date of their Records, must acknowledge that there was, for ought they can demonstratively alledge to the contrary, innumerable Years that preceeded the Revelations they assert: From whence may be concluded that there was unaccountable Revolutions of Time when they neither had Being or Belief. And therefore no Objection, against the *Theist*, if he rejects Tenents that include a Modern Date; or not so Infinitely uncomputable by Time, as his own: It being impossible to evidence any Conviction of the Soul more Antient than the World, and the Miracles it con-

tains. Not but the Divine Power could have ordain'd, if ſuitable to his Decree, one or more ſubſequent Worlds as amply wonderful as this we behold; there being no limitation to the Omnipotent, if pleas'd to beſtow any miraculous Method in order to our Senſe and Conviction: But then this muſt have been perpetually evident from the time it had Beginning, as clearly as is diſcernable any other Object of Divine Admiration and Reverence within the compaſs of the Univerſe. On which conſiderations, the *Theiſt* conceives himſelf obliged to diſent from divers miraculous Tenents deliver'd by the Pens of men, becauſe not genuinely diſcernable in the vaſt Volume of the World, without any intermiſſion

miſſion of Wonders, and Providence conſonant to their Divine conveyance. It being a Soleſciſme, in his opinion, that men ſhould recede from the day light of Faith, to ſearch for Inviſible Conviction. And conſequently Inferrs, that ſince there are no apparent Miracles, but what are contain'd in the Univerſe of Heaven and Earth, he ought to prove from thence the devotion of his Faith. On which account he amply receives the aſſurance of Divine demonſtration by the Eye of his Intellect; Leaving other Creeds to argue, from tranſcriptions of ſpiritual Revelations, their Syſtems of belief; or from whence they ſeverally Inferr, as they rationally gather, that the Holy Precepts, of one or other, are to be embrac'd by

them. Whereas, the greateſt part of religious Perſwaſion are rather the Effects of Cuſtome and Education, then viſible Conviction of any faculty of the Humane Soul.

Inſomuch, that the *Theiſt* affirms, that a Man born blind, may be as Intelligibly perſwaded of the Doctrine of *Theiſme*, together with the devotion annexed to it, as if he had a plenary ſight and proſpect of all the Wonders within the Compaſs of the Univerſe. It not being to be doubted that ſuch a perſon, tho without Eyes to diſcern, might by his Reaſon, or Senſe of Feeling, not only conclude that he lives, but that he is alſo ſuſtain'd by a providential Goodneſs and Power, as certainly as he feels within, or without

out him; the Effects of Heat or Cold, as alſo nouriſh'd by Food, neither of which could be produc'd or caus'd by himſelf; And therefore muſt concede that he Subſiſts by the diſpenſation of an Exiſtence more excellent then his own; and conſequently oblig'd to give thanks devoutly on his knees for the Bleſſings he receives, tho without Eyes to behold the particulars of Heaven and Earth, from whence they proceed.

On the contrary, ſhould this unſeeing Man be requir'd to adhere to any religious Propoſal, that preſented no other contexture to his Senſe, then a ſtory told of ſupernatural Deeds and Revelation, which concenter'd with no Rational Proprietie of his Being and Nature: He would doubtleſs

doubtless Annex his belief to the Doctrine of *Theisme*, with whatsoever, by undeniable consequence from it, might compleat his Devotion. These discussions, as being but previously Inserted in order to farther expand the Fonds on which the *Theist* erects his Tenents; It will be necessary to consider these three Particulars.

The

The First, *As to the Being of the Universe.*

The Second, *Tending to the Cause and Manner of its Production, as also its wonderful Conduct, Order, and Preservation, with some Opinions of the Learned therein.*

The Third, *Including the Religion of the* Theist, *and the manner of Holy Adoration redounding from thence.*

As to the First Particular.

THE *Theist* does not concern his Imagination with the trite contests that both amuse and

and weary Mens understandings, by their Impossible determinations, as they are Debated in Schools; where some undertake to determine that, by the Efficacy of the Divine Will, the World had an original Creation from nothing: Or as others Assert, from matter that had a precedent Existency, and afterwards dispos'd by Omnipotency into the Figure we now behold. Neither of which opinions the *Theist* allows to be his: It being more perspicuous, in his Judgment, to believe that the Universe, with all it contains, is admirable, then to define by what Method, or Means its wonderful Structure was produc'd. But however it came to pass, 'twas certainly accomplish'd, without pains, by whatsoever was the manner of the

the operation, becauſe in every thing it comprehends there is an eaſineſs of Order and Being; otherwiſe there could be no one Individual, of any kind, but might be deſtructive to another, and the Cauſe periſh with the Effect, which would tend to a period of Providence.

For tho it be apparent that Bodies of Life, whether Animals, or Vegetables, are ſubject to alteration and Death as any of them corupt in order to the Generation of others, yet nothing is abſolutely deſtroy'd, but rather varied as a continual ſupplement to more productions; ſo that the Cauſe remains entire, however it effects Alteration.

Examples are obvious, in many Particulars, of which, theſe are ocularly Illuſtrious; the Sun, Moon

Moon and Stars, are influential Cauſes of innumerable Alterations of Bodies beneath 'em, yet have no change in themſelves, as they Operate on other things. And thus it is very manifeſt that the vaſt Bulk of the Univerſe ſubſiſts by open providential Cauſes, and their Effects, which by a Series of humane Thought, aſcend untill the Imagination, to wonder leaves 'em, as being not within its Capacity to proceed higher: And therefore, according to the poetical Alluſion of *Homer*'s Chain of Divine Providence, ſtupendiouſly Comits the Scals of its Cauſes, as fixt at the foot of *Jupiters* Chair.

If the total complexe of the Univerſe, does admirably convict us that it has an unconceivable Structure and Being, the

Author

Author of its Exiſtency muſt impoſe on the Soul a more ſublime Admiration, which by the *Theiſt* is readily devoted to Divine Omnipotency.

There is no ordinary Underſtanding that may not Signally preceive the providential Reſults in Cauſes and Effects, of a deified Power; but not with the ſame poſſibility diſcern the Station or Eſſence of the wonderful Author.

Notwithſtanding, it is obviouſly apparent, that there are diverſities of Elementary Operations and Subſiſtencies appertaining to the Earth, on which we tread, that, as to the Cauſes from whence they proceed, are as far remote from our Conceptions as any Influenc'd from the ſupreameſt Orb of Heaven:

Which

Which experience fully assures, it being not more obscure to our Intellects, why some parts of Earth should enclose divers Materials, Mines of Diamonds, Gold, Silver, Minerals, Streams, and watry Depths, when in others are found Quarries of Stone, and Impenetrable Rocks.

Nor less clouded will be our Imagination, should we search on Mountains tops, and then discover the Head of a Spring, that by secret descending supplies perpetually the Current of a mighty River: Would not a Man think that it were as Impossible to find the Cause of this wondrous Scource, as by Reason to conceive why the Bosome of the Earth should nourish the different Materials already mention'd. Yet duely consider'd,

the

the Uſes for which they are ordain'd. the courſe Stone or Peeble differs not in Value from the pureſt Diamond, as being more frequent for uſage, tho not, in opinion, of the ſame price: So variouſly has Providence provided for our Ornaments and conveniencies of Life. Could the Univerſe be compair'd with any Conception of the Humane Mind; it were poſſible to Imagine a World as prodigiouſly wonderful, in Whole and in Parts, as this we viſibly behold; but that were to extend thought beyond what is actually Miraculous, and therefore no leſs Abſur'd then Impoſſible; becauſe we could think of nothing but would have ſome material Reſemblance, to what was obſerv'd before, within the Compaſs of

the World we Inhabit: On which Ground it may be concluded that there can be no Miracle to Senſe, either great or ſmall, other then what is locally Encompaſs'd by the Circumference of Heaven and Earth.

Should a Man endeavour, by any Extaſie of Thought, to contemplate the Being of Deity, his Imagination could extend no farther then the uſual Courſe of providential Operations: And ſhould he attempt to explain the Divine Eſſence, he could not ſeparate his thought from Apprehending the Corporeal Shape and Likeneſs of ſome Object he had before obſerv'd. Wherefore, 'tis a preſumption in words, if deliver'd by them, that God can be otherwiſe underſtood then by his admir'd Providence and Works. Nor

Nor is it poſſible to Aſcribute other Definition to Omnipotency; for tho God may be underſtood to have the utmoſt Perfection of ſpiritual Exiſtency, and what is more, demonſtratively ſuch by operations of a ſpiritual Nature, or equivalent to it, as ſhall be evidently prov'd in the next Particular of this Treatiſe: Notwithſtanding, it ſeems Impoſſible to word the Definition of a Spirit, becauſe nothing can be deliver'd by Speech but muſt be the Object of one, or more, of the Senſes, and no Man will averr that he can either ſee or feel a Spirit: It being unconceivable that a Corporeal Eye or Senſe whatſoever, ſhould perceive any thing that has not bodily parts; otherwiſe then it may be exerted in ſome

equivalent Capacity, as already expreſs'd.

But before the firſt Grand Particular, of this Treatiſe, receives a period: The *Theiſt* would be underſtood that where he mentions the miraculous Structure and Continuance of the total Univerſe, he does not Annex a more Ineffable Wonder to the Whole then he does to every individual Part, whether of Animal or Vegetable Subſiſtency. A Miracle is as abſolute in Epitomy as in the utmoſt extent of Bredth, Depth, and Height: Inſomuch, that every particular thing appertaining to Earth, above and below its Surface, are no leſs ſtupendious then the vaſtneſs of its Circumference and Bulk.

If

If ask'd why the Earth is adorn'd with Flowers of a various Coulour and Beauty, and but the Graſs and Leaves of Trees greenly flouriſhing: The moſt intellegent Man can give no perfect reaſon, no more then if requir'd to prove why any one Stone appears of a comlier Figure and Complexion than another. If farther demanded how Rivers and Seas are ſupply'd with numberleſs Streams that are maintain'd and encreas'd: He muſt profeſs his Ignorance, becauſe unknown to him, both the manner of the Operation and Materials by which they were originally produc'd. If interogated why Air is thiner then Earth or Water, or why Stars are brighter then Trees, or not obſerv'd to augment by growth

like them, he must for the same Reason, answer as ignorantly as he did to any of the precedent Questions.

To conclude, had it pleas'd Omnipotency to have bestow'd rational Understanding to every Species of Being, and Life in the Regions of Air and Earth together, with whatsoever has a liquid Existence in the Streams and Oceans of the Universe: The Fish, Beast, and Plant, would no less admire the diversities of their Nature's Proprieties, and Shapes, then those of Man and Woman, or how all of them Subsist and Encrease in their several kinds. Neither could Mankind less stupendiously wonder how any of those were produc'd, then by what means the first Man and Woman had a primitive Life:

In

In which consideration, the humane Intellect is no less pos'd by the Miracle of its own Composure and Being, then it is by contemplating how the vast Structure of the World, with its summ of Wonders, was compleated as 'tis now beheld.

Which prefectly demonstrates that there is neither *magis*, or *minus*, in the miraculous Act whereby was produc'd the total Universe, or any Individial thing that is contain'd by its Icommensurable Compass.

From whence the *Theist* concludes that Omnipotency may be Emphatically defin'd by the Miracles of its Works, since by no other Definition, or Sylogisme, which the Schools provide, it can be so visibly apprehended.

And it were vain to Imagine that the Divine Power, too Infinite to be comprehended by any Syſtem of words, ſhould be by that Method, no leſs convictive, to the Eye of Thought, then it is by ocular demonſtration of Things manifeſtly Admirable: Wherefore Mankind ought to acknowledge, with the higheſt Reverence of the Soul, that the Eſſence of Omnipotency, Imcomprehenſible by accents of Speech, may be equivalently explain'd in the ſuperlative Wonders of the World, and the Works it contains. Which in ſumm, is the Doctrine of the *Theiſt*, as it relates to a Divine Power and Being,

But as to the Sphere or Reſidence of the Almighty; which by the Tenents of ſome is Imagin'd

gin'd to be above the Supreameſt of the Celeſtial Orbs, the *Theiſt* does not undertake to define; which were no leſs abſur'd then to attribute to an Infinite, a circumſcrib'd Being.

The Geomettrician certainly proves, that nothing can be ſaid to have place; other then what is contain'd by proportional Lines within the Compaſs of ſome Figure: Whereby he demonſtrates, that whatſoever is alledg'd to proportion, muſt conſequently be allow'd Parts, as in the Dimention of Alineal ſuperficies, in any kind, or ſolids, as the Cube, Globe, Cone, Parabola, or the like: The moſt excellent of which cannot comprehend the Figure of Deity, which if without Body, there is no poſſibility of its reſemblance to any

any Corporeal Thing or Measure: Wherefore the denomination of Heaven, tho Immenſly ſuppos'd beyond the higheſt of Stars that ſhine to wonder above us, is too narrow a Station for the Preſence-Chamber of the Deity: Becauſe the nominating of Place does imply the circumſcription of material Parts; and no Man can be ſo Ignorant as to ſuppoſe that there is any ſuch thing as a bodily Infinite, or that any local quantity may be Incomenſurably acknowledg'd.

Notwithſtanding it muſt be granted that the opinion of Holy Perſons, tho not ſtrictly to be prov'd, in appropriating to the ſublimeſt height the manſion of Omnipotency, is allowable, becauſe devout contemplation the farther it aſcends upward has a more

more remote, or ineffable Excellency, as being exalted above Things of more familiar observance, tho not less Admirable; as has been precedently observ'd, then consists in the speculation of any heigher objects of thought that impresseth on the Understanding, Reverential acknowledgment of a Supream Power that by its munificence supports the Fabrick of the Universe, and all it contains: Wherefore, in Reverence to discernless or unknown Being, a place unknown, as the most suitable Epithite, may be term'd the select Seat of the Almighty. The Nature of Men having more dread, however, unpereeptible of what they conceive they ought stupendriously to believe then if it were present to their Understandings:

Insomuch

Insomuch that could the humane Eye surpass its usual prospect of the Sun and Stars, and next make a visible discovery of a Heaven far more Glorious then any of the shining Sphere already discern'd, the wonderful Objects might, in short time, be as regardlesly perceiv'd as any of the sublime Illuminations observ'd before.

So heedless is Man of things that require his perfect Admiration.

But as to the denomination of Heaven, as a sublime some where, rather then place of the Bless'd, as the Schools define, with the beautifical Vision of the Almighty, as also the perpetual Felicity of pious Immortality: 'Tis a passible Opinion in the Judgment of the *Theist*, and may not be Incongruously

gruously deriv'd from experimental Observation; as by the Eye the Imagination ascends by comparing the different Magnitudes, Heights, and Splendors of the Moon, Sun, Planets, and Stars; by which gradual Contemplation, or as it were step, by step, is apprehended a more Divine and sublime Being of the Deity.

The great Philosopher *Aristotle*, was not dissentaneous to this Notion, when he defin'd the Celestial appearances, so term'd here instead of Bodies, for Reasons that will soon follow, by the Name of a fifth Essence, as an extraordinary refin'dness Incident to their Being and Natures, Invariable in their Grandure and Figures without the least signification or tendency

to

to Elementary Compoſition or Change, as ſo many particular Emblems of Eternity, by whoſe admir'd Illuminations the humane Soul might be guided to the tranſcendent acknowledgment of a more Illuſtrious and Divine Exiſtence.

But enough has been ſaid relating to the firſt Branch of this Treatiſe, and the Being of a God.

The

The Second *Particular, tending to the Cauſe and Manner of the Worlds production: As alſo its wonderful Conduct, Order, and Preſervation; with ſome Opinions of the Learned therein.*

IT has been evidently explain'd, by the precedent Diſcuſſions, that the Univerſe, withall its ſurrounds, is diſplay'd as ocularly miraculous: And therefore incumbent on humane Senſe to be a diligent Admirer of all its Objects. The neglect of which cannot be enough Reprov'd, ſince it proceeds from ſloathful

ſloathful Imprudence, or Inadvertency of Men, in being not more propenſly diligent in devoting the Duty of their admirations as fully as the Wonders of Providence are obvious to their ſight. Inſomuch, that a tale told of any extraordinary Fact, if but ſuppos'd miraculous, ſhall more aſſure their Imaginations, then what may be Admirably beheld in the open Face of the Univerſe, every minute of Life: Or that familiar Convictions, becauſe familiar, ſhould be leſs regarded then ſtupendious Relations without ocular or ſenſible Aſſurance: Whereas the wonderful continuance of Objects, and ſuch are thoſe which are perſpicuouſly numerous, and within the Compaſs of the World, ought to induce our moſt conſtant,

ſtant, and ſolemn Admiration as ſo many teſtimonials of an Omnipotent Author. Not that the *Theiſt* would occaſion, by Aſſertions of this Nature, ſuch perplexities in the Soul as are obſerv'd in Men that would undertake to diſcover Cauſes and Effects far obſcur'd by the Vail of Providence; or by what methods of Omnipotency the Univerſe had Original Beginning. The moſt general belief of Men, however differing in other Tenents, either as they are *Jews*, *Chriſtians*, or *Mahomitans*, Is, that the total World together with all it circumſcribs above and below, was by the Will and Dictate of the Almighty created from nothing: And that Incorporeal Subſtances, defined by the Schools: Angels and Spirits had

a concomitant production within the compass of six Days, as the Scripture affirms, with Elementary Bodies of innumerable Kinds according to the diversities of their Situations, Shapes, and manner of Subsistence.

But here it must be understood, that it cannot be properly Imagin'd how an Infinite Being and Operator should be said to effect, in any degrees of Time, whatsoever was produc'd by Omnipotent Power; because every Act that may be computed or number'd in Time, however swift its Accelaration presupposeth Motion and Comensurable Parts, which were too heavily attributed to the Method and Deeds of the Almighty. Wherefore the expressions may rather pass for a manner of speaking

ing

ing whereby Holy Writ would more familiarly captivate humane Understanding, which cannot apprehend or think of any Object or Existency, in any consideration, that is not, more or less, within the Verge of Time as it is judg'd by the Understanding. So that where the Text enumerat's Days in which the Universe was compleated; 'tis not meant as if God had set a task upon himself, to be finish'd in any Journals of time, because the Effect of his Eternal Determination could have no temporary Epithite; and therefore the words of the Writer whereby to deliver, for the benefit of humane Capacity, the Infinite Decree and Operations of the Omnipotent, as temporarily produc'd; must be so intended, be-

cauſe impoſſible to be apprehended in any other dialect, and Man the Reader.

Another Opinion the *Theiſt* obſerves, and much affected by modern Authors; which is, that there was a material World in Being before it had the Date of Creation from the Pen of *Moſes*: Affirming, according to the noted Maxim, that of nothing, nothing could be made; and this original Matter, tho by them ſuppoſs'd Corporeal, had no perfect compoſition till diſpoſs'd by Providence into ſuch bodily Proportions and Forms as are manifeſt in the ſupreamer and lower Regions of the Univerſe. In this Chaos of Matter, in conſequence to their Syſtem of the Worlds Production, muſt undeniably be granted a capacitative

Being

Being of Incorporeal Subſtances, as well as thoſe that appertain'd, as they Affirm, to the bulk of Matter, and by the ſame proceſs receiv'd a future perfection: By which Conception of theirs they ſeem, abſurdly to complicate Eternity of Matter, and Subſtances of all Kinds, whether Corporeal of Spiritual; untill all of them were ſubſequently compleated by Divine Ordination: but this Imagination tends not only to Aſſert a double Eternity, by allowing a perpetual Exiſtency to Matter, as well as to the Being of an Omnipotent Power, but alſo by affirming that all thnigs were previouſly diſpoſs'd, from ſomething, either Corporeal or Spiritual, that was Incedent to their precedent Capacities; by which they annex a tempora-

ry Operation to the Works of the Almighty. So that, in effect, they allow, instead of Creation, no other then a providential Alteration and Refinement of bodily Parts, no less then Substances, that were to be exalted to spiritual Perfection. From which modalities, or manner of precedent and future Subsistences, they derive their Tenents relating to the Being of Angels, Spirits, of all degrees, with every thing that has Being in the Visible and Invisible parts of the World.

And as their most Emphatical Argument, in reverence to humane Original, they plead the Text of Scripture, where it is said, *That God form'd Man out of Clay*, as precedent Matter.

But this excludes not the Creation of that Clay so wonderfully

ly Impreſs'd by the Almighty as to compleat the Figure of Humanity; unleſs they annex perpetuity to Matter, which were to double Eternity, by aſſigning that Infinite Attribute no leſs to Matter then God: An abſurdity condemn'd by the Doctrine of the *Theiſt*, as already Inſtanc'd; who rather beholds the Univerſe as the Object of his Admiration, then undertakes to aſſert by any Method, that he can contemplate, the Manner of its wonderful Exiſtence; as not poſſible, in his Judgment, to conceive how any thing had precedent Being that is not manifeſt in a preſent Cauſe. Inſomuch that he doubts not to affirm that had Man been capable of apprehending how the World, with all the particulars it contains, was produc'd,

there had not been wanted the Inſcriptions of Providence, on whatſoever has Being, within its Circumference, whereby Mankind might have legibly diſcern'd how its total and Parts had the compleat Structures, and Subſiſtences that are viſible to the Eye.

But ſince the whole with its wonderful Particulars are within the Complex of a mighty Round more amazingly vaſt then can be Intelligently penetrated by humane Senſe, or the height of its Diameter meaſur'd by any Scale of Thoughts that can Aſcend to the utmoſt Point of its ſupream Cauſe: By the muniſence of the Omnipotent we are in ſome ſort familiarly acquainted with miraculous Objects tho not with their miraculous Author:

thor: And notwithſtanding that ſpiritual Eſſences together with their admir'd Proprieties, are not ſo readily defin'd, or the manner of their Exiſtence and Operations, as Corporeal Beings, however wonderful, that actually Imploy the Senſe as they ſympathize in bodily Temperaments, Parts, or Proportions, with thoſe of Mankind: Yet even of theſe we may have ſuch real apprehenſions as admirably Approximate the, otherwiſe, remote ſpeculation or their Order, Conduct, and Nature. Let the Example be taken from the Sun, and Stars, which the *Theiſt* rather denominates ſpiritual Appearances, or equivalently ſuch, then any other definition, given of them, by the greateſt Philoſopher; and he may be well allowed that liberty

berty if he proves them equivalent in their refin'd Illuminations, Beings, and Motions, to such stupendious Excellencies that can be no otherwise comprehended then as they are effecatiously spiritual.

The Grand Philosopher *Aristotle*, (as before quoted,) by the acuteness of his Intellect, gives the Definition of quintessential Perfection to the Celestial Luminaries, which signifies a Fifth different Essence from any thing that had any Ingredients of the Four Elements. But had he as accurately consider'd their wonderful Motions and Celerity, as they consummate their Revolutions, he might have allow'd them the Epithites of spiritual Equivalents, in every respect.

The

The beſt Account that the moſt celebrated Aſtronomers can give of the Suns diurnal Progreſs, is that he exceeds fifteen Millions of *Engliſh* Miles in the four and twenty Hours; and conſequently, that in one Minute of Time his expedition is ſomewhat more then eleven Thouſand a Hundred and eleven Miles of the ſame Account: Which incomprehenſible ſwiftneſs ſeems liker to vaniſhing then apparent Motion. It being Impoſſible for any thing that has bodily Compoſition to move with that Celirity, becauſe whatſoever has Corporeal Parts muſt take up ſpace, and therefore move by ſlower Degrees and Computations then in the Example given of the Suns acceleration: Nor is there any Individual Motion,

Motion, within the Circle of the Universe, below the Orbs above, that has any competent Similitude to their admirable Movements. The hasty Currents of the Ocean, or wings of the loudest Winds are slow, in their utmost Expiditions, and so are the most sudden flashes of Lightning; if compar'd with one moments Journey of the Celestial Spheres,

And what is of higher Admiration, were it so decreed by Providence, 'tis as possible for the Sun to finish his diurnal Revolution in the same Minute of Time, that the Astronomers allot to the Miles above mention'd, as for a Thought, that is spirited by the Soul, to Imagine, in a moment, a Methematical Line extended from the East point

to

to the West of the Horrizon.

And thus may the wondrous Acceleration of the Sun be no less prespicuously contemplated, then, in an Instant, may be perceiv'd any Ray of his arrive to the Eye.

But should any solid Body, whether little or great, be supposed to move, with the swiftest Imagination, from any one Point of the Compass to another; its dimensions of Length, Breadth, and Height, both in a Phisophical and Mathematical Sense, would have local removes, or transition from place to place by such parts of Time as can have no comparative Proportion to the Instance already given, of the Suns momentary Celerity, then 'tis possible to parallel the start

ſtart of a Thought to the meaſures of bodily Motion.

From whence it follows, that if the diurnal Revolution of the Sun is in every particle of Time, miraculous; a more then ordinary definition ought to be allow'd to his Revolution and Eſſence. No one viſible Radiation of the Sun but reſembles, as the learned in Opticks deliver, a Geometrical Line: But becauſe no ſuch Line can be the Object of Sight, but as it ſeems to have Corporeal Breadth: It has therefore pleas'd Divine Providence ſo comfortably to Illuminate the World, that every Beam tranſmitted by the Sun, is viſible with his Figure, tho his Eſſence be not more underſtood, by any definitive Term, then the Miracle of his Light and Motion

On which ground, the *Theist* conceives it very significant to attribute, instead of other denomination, the Equivalency of spiritual appearances to the Sun and Stars, as suitable to undeniable Proprieties in them, whereby is apprehended that spiritual Existencies may be seen, tho not understood; yet by their Visibility directed, as the shining guides of Providence, to Imagine more excellent Beings in the Supream Palace of the Almighty.

Next to the Immense progressions of the Stars and planitary Orbs that compleat the Twenty-four hourly Periods of the Day: The *Theist* as fully admires the sudain diversity of their Longitudes, Latitudes, Excentricities, Oppositions Conjunctions,

junctions, direct, or Retrograde, together with their various Heights and Distances from the Centre of the Earths superficies: To demonstrate all which, would require a large Astronomical System.

Wherefore the *Theist* annexeth to the diurnal; his additional Wonder to what may be usually inferr'd from observation of the Suns Annual Motion, by which the vast Orb of Light, and the Worlds miraculous Eye, beholds its Brightness forward and backward remov'd, swifter then can be Instanc'd by Thought, yet with no contradiction to Time; tho without the Suns contradictory Motion neither the hours of the Day or Year could be number'd: If by his glorious diurnal progress he summs Millions

lions of Degrees forward, he moves, in the ſame Compaſs of Time, ſomewhat leſs then one Degree backward towards the gradual finiſhing of the Ecliptick Year: In which, as ſo many periodical Bleſſings of Providence, the Elementary Round of the Univerſe has preſervation, as alſo the Life, Growth, and Subſiſtence of its Innumerable Individuals. From whence the *Theiſt* has reiterated aſſurance that the Sun and Stars, as to their undefinable Eſſence and Motion, may be term'd, (as before Inſerted,) ſpiritual Equivalents; ſince no Corporeal Movement can poſſibly perform, in all its Parts, too contrary Motions in the ſame Inſtant of Time.

But whatſoever may be ſaid to have a ſpiritual Operation, cannot be circumſcrib'd by place, or in the Phraſe of the Schools, have the Epithite of *prius* and *poſterius* in Motion; wherefore the Miracle, not otherwiſe to be worded, may be, in ſome kind compar'd to the expanſion, this way, and that way, of a Thought, or as one may conceive, as precedently mention'd, a Geometrical Line extended, to any diſtance, forward and backward by the ſwiftneſs of Imagination. And whoſoever would oppoſe the definition here given, as it relates to motional Beings above, the *Theiſt* leaves him, to the Inquiſition of his Brain, to find a better.

In

In the mean while, 'tis very manifeſt, that by no Speculation of theirs they can give any nominal Definition, whereby they might ſignificantly extricate the difficulties, they are under, by endeavouring to compute the wonderful Motions above otherwiſe then as they allow Corporeal Subſtances to the Sun and Stars: Which tho miraculouſly appearing Effectually ſuch, becauſe otherwiſe Men and Creatures could not have the benefit of their Illuminations, Heat, and Influence: Yet, (for the Reaſons already given,) the *Theiſt* affirms that as in their Motions, and Operations, they are virtually ſpiritual, or which is all one with the Denomination, (before aſſerted,) of ſpiritual Equivalents: Notwithſtanding, that for

the advantage of humane perception and Commodities of Life, they seem to be corporeally discernable. And no Man can affirm that the Omnipotent disposer of the Universe, with all its appurtenances, could not, by miraculous Benevolence, conferr bodily appearance on Existencies that, consider'd in themselves, were distitute of Visible Beings.

But since the Motions of the Celestial Orbs must evidently relate to their Manner of Existence and Essence, the *Theist* undertakes to demonstrate the Assertion from the most Erudite and accurate Astronomical Systems.

Let the *Copernican Hypotheses*, because in this Age, of greatest Repute, be made the Example; by

by which 'tis alledg'd, as the moſt facile proof, that the Sun ſtands as the looker on, in his Sphere, whilſt the Earth performs the diurnal and annual Revolution, which *Ptolomy*, and *Tycho*, with other learned Obſervators, Attributed to the Sun: Tho it be well known that *Copernicus* deriv'd his *Hypotheſis* from Antient *Pythagoras*, who, Imagin'd the Earth to be a Planet betwixt *Mars* and *Venus*, and ſome of his Succeſſors.

Notwithſtanding, it muſt be granted that the Ingenuity of *Copernicus* added ſome Refinement to the Tenent of the Earths Motion: Yet rather taken up by him, as he apprehended it more aptly Coherent with Aſtronomical computations then really his belief: As appears by the

Dedication of his Works to an Eminent Cardinal.

The Figure deſcrib'd by the Earth, in her diurnal and annual Revolution, was circular, according to *Copernicus*: And herein, except in his *Hypotheſis*, he differ'd neither from *Ptolomy* or *Tycho*, as they determin'd to the Sun and Stars circular Motions, but *Kepler*, who liv'd after the lateſt of theſe, appropriated to the Earth an Elipſical Revolution, whence he Imply'd that the Earth is of the Shape of an Elipſis: Which if true of the Earths Figure, the ſame might be allow'd to be deſcrib'd by her Motion; becauſe no Corporeal Subſtance can move, but it muſt neceſſarily aſſimulate its outward Form and Proportion: So if a Roler be turn'd on the

Ground.

Ground it will Impreſs, if there diſcernable, its figurative Repreſentation; beſides abundance of Examples that might be given to the ſame purpoſe.

But as for the Incommenſurable boundary of the Univerſe, 'tis doubtleſs circular becauſe the moſt perfect of Figures: In which there is no point of its Beginning or End, if conſider'd in its ſelf; and therefore by its admirable Propriety more ſuitably circumſcrib'd the World with all the Wonders comprehended in it.

How the Earth, if ſuppoſ'd to move can, in its total Complex, be properly term'd either Globouſly round, as *Copernicus* Syſtematically allow'd, or a Conical ſolid, in the Form of an Elipſis, as moſt of the late *Co-*

pernicans Imagine; Is far from being Corobarated by any ſenſible Demonſtration: But rather, on the contrary, occularly confuted by viewing of the different Scituations in the Earth of Hills, Mountains, Valleys, Rocks, Woods, Seas, Rivers, and the like: Which cannot, apparently be circumſcrib'd by any Figure that can be nam'd Geometrically Regular.

And if granted, that the Earth does move, in any method they delineate, they produce nò proof that it viſibly does ſo: Inſtead of which they undertake to ſuppoſe that it may have the Motion they aſſign to it, inſtead of the Sun, and not be ſeen to move, according to the noted Verſe in *Virgil.*

Provehimur

—Provehimur portu, terasque urbesque Recedunt.

Yet this is their firmeſt Argument whereby they would perſwade opinon, that the Eye is not ſo certain, in beholding the riſing and ſetting of the Orbs above, as their Doctrine.

The main Allegation by which they ſeem not only to warrant the Earths Motion, in all Capacities, Inſtead of the Sun; but alſo to deny diurnal Revolution, both to the fix'd Stars and Planets, as they only appropriate to the Motion of the Earth, the twenty four Hours that terminate the natural Day; is, that if diurnal Circulation be granted to the ſupream Sphere of Stars, they muſt expedite, according to Aſtronomical computation,

643000 *German* Miles in a Moment, or two Seconds of an Hour: As alſo that the Planet *Saturn* next to them, in the vaſtneſs of his Orb and Height, muſt Revolve 909 of thoſe Miles by the ſame Meaſure and Compaſs of Time. All which may be granted, tho confeſſedly wonderful, if allowed to the Stars, as before deſcrib'd, Motion and Eſſence equivalently ſpiritual, that like the tranſition of a momentary Thought, ſpirited by the Soul, may ſurpaſs any diſtance, or meaſure of Miles that can be computed, as has been precedently Inſtanc'd, and would tend to unneceſſary Repetition if again mention'd.

Wherefore, ſhould any Inſpecter of this Treatiſe ſhock at the Epithite of ſpiritual Equivalency

lency attributed to the admirable Expedition of the Celeſtial Luminaries; he ought to conſider that Words devis'd, where the Subject treated on is not in it ſelf exactly Intelligible, may have the requiſits of a Definition, if thereby probably open'd to the underſtanding, of whatſoever had been more obſcure without it.

Nor can the Importancy of the Authors ſuppoſition, on this ſublime Account, be farther taxable then Aſtronomical *Phenomenas* Antient or Modern, if with the likeneſs of proof, Invented by them, they compute, in order to reduce within the Compaſs of Imaginary Rules, what had elſe been too boundleſs for humane Science.

'Tis

'Tis not to be doubted that the *Copernicans* will be oppoſers of the manner of the Syſtem, deliver'd here relating to the Eſſence and Motions of the Stars of every Denomination, by reaſon that the groſly conceive that they are of a Corporeal Nature as well as the Earth, which they have Elevated into the room of a Planet betwixt the Sphere of *Mars* and *Venus*, according to the Tenents of *Pythagoras*, (as before obſerv'd:) For which they give no better account then that the Body of the Earth, reputed by Aſtronomers, at leaſt, a Hundred and ſixty ſix times leſſer then the appearing dimenſions of the Sun, may ſooner Revolve a eleven Thouſand one Hundred and eleven of our Miles in a Minute, then the Greater Body,

as

as they call it, of the Sun: The hard to apprehend how either of them, in a Corporeal Senſe, can expedite that Celerity in the ſame Portion of Time: For the Earth however diminutive, if compar'd with the Sun, yet as to common Underſtanding, and the Meaſure that is allow'd its Compaſs, it ſeems too big in any Figure, to Anſwer the Tenents of the *Copernicans* by the ſwiftneſs of its Progreſſion in a temporary Period ſo very ſmall. And as they cannot but acknowledge the Movement wonderful, whether allotted to the Sun or Earth, ſo it may be undeniably a-like, in either of them; if proceeding from a miraculous Cauſe.

Nor does it appear, if granted the Theorem of the Earths Motion,

Motion, that either *Copernicus*, or the moſt diligent of his Aſtronomical Succeſſors, have by any exactneſs in their Computations, exceeded ſuch as have been perform'd by the *Ptolomaick* or or *Tyconiqæ* Method; the latter of which perſons ſtands at this Day, more renown'd for his accurate Obſervations, than any, that can be for any other pretended, if compar'd with his.

But becauſe Demonſtration is a ſurer proof then can be deduc'd from the greateſt Probability of Argument: Let it be granted that the Sun as well as the Earth, has bodily Parts, according to the *Copernican* Senſe, and *Hypotheſis*; as alſo that the Sun is the Center of of the Earth? Or that the Earth, as others affirm, is the Center of the Sun?

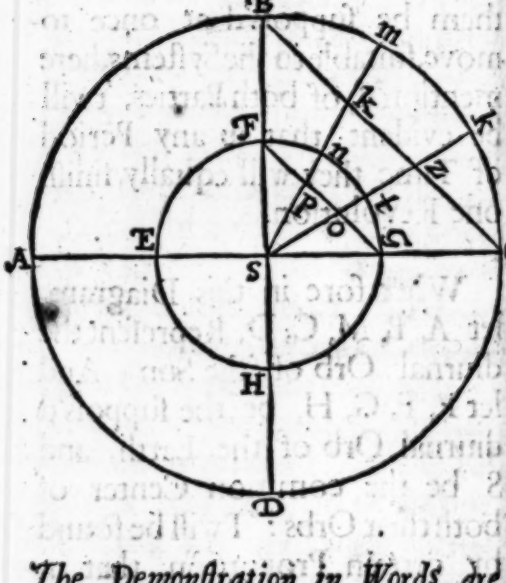
And

And let both of them in Figure, be acknowledg'd Circular.

By the Diagram, here annex'd, 'will be manifeſt, that if both of them be ſuppoſs'd at once to move, ſuitable to the Syſtems, here mention'd, of both Parties, 'twill be evident that in any Period of Time they will equally finiſh one Revolution.

Wherefore in this Diagram, let A, B, M, C, D, Repreſent the diurnal Orb of the Sun; And let E, F, G, H, be the ſuppoſs'd diurnal Orb of the Earth, and S be the common Center of both their Orbs: 'Twill be found by certain Proportion, that in the ſame Compaſs of Time, however vaſt the ſpace that the Earth can be Imagin'd to move from F, to N, in the ſame Time

Time the much greater Orb of the Sun may Revolve from B to M.



The Demonſtration in Words are thus.

In Parallel Circles, as the Semidiameter of one, is to the Semidiameter

Semidiameter of the other, ſo is ſine, vers'd ſine, ſubtenſe of one Circle, to the right ſine, vers'd ſine, ſubtenſe of the other: According to the 11 *Prop.* of the 7 Book of *Euclid*, and confirm'd by the 4 of the 6, for as S F : F P :: S B : B K : the Triangles S P F and S K B are Equiangled, the Angle a S common to both, and right Angled at P and K, and therefore the third equal in both, as alſo the ſides proportional: The ſame is demonſtrable of either of the other Triangles.

To make all which evident to Senſe, let a ſmall Thread be faſten'd or held in the Center S, and move the other end of it from B to M, it ſhall as ſoon come to the greater ſpace B M,

as to the leſſer F N, which was to be prov'd; and the ſame may be Affirm'd of F G, in in the Triangle S, F, G, or of B C, in the greateſt Triangle S, B, C. Wherefore the Sun may as ſoon Revolve from B, to M, as the Earth can from F, to N, if both be granted to move, at once by the ſame Cauſe: And what can be appli'd to both, if ſuppoſs'd to be mov'd togteher, ought to be ſeparately allow'd the Sun as more ſuitable to ocular Evidence.

Wherefore the *Theiſt* concluds, this ſecond Head of this Treatiſe, with demonſtrative aſſurance that the *Copernicans* are no leſs Confuted as they would Imagine that the Earth moves, Inſtead of the Sun, then they, or any

any other Opposers must be, if contradictory to any of his former Principles rationally asserted.

The Third *Particular explicating the* Faith *of the* Theist, *and his Manner of Adoration, redounding from thence.*

THIS not doubted by the *Theist*, that it has been enough prov'd in the beginning of this Treatise, that the open Causes and Effects of Divine Providence sensibly beheld in the ordain'd Constitution of the Universe, and all its Parts, as so many undeniable publicati-

ons that ought to Convict the
Reverence of the humane Soul
in Reference to the Worſhip of
Omnipotency ; could by no o-
ther means then by micaculous
Order and viſible Deeds, be ſo
familiarly communicated to the
preception of Mankind ; all
which has been precedently Ex-
plain'd.

And whoſoever denies that
holy Belief, may not, in that
Method, be perſpicuously ex-
erted, muſt have recourſe to
ſuch Relations of Divine Wor-
ſhip as cannot, in their Nature
exceed moral Certainties, or the
Effects of Cuſtome and Edu-
cution ; which, in their utmoſt
extent, have leſs aſſurance than
is evident in the Proof of any
one Propoſition of the Ele-
ments of *Euclide*. And 'twere
abſur'

abſurd to imagine that a Man ſhould be more able to explain the Properties of a Line, or ſuperficies, then to Demonſtrate how he comes by that main Article, of his Creed, the belief of one God.

Wherefore the *Theiſt*, as an Infallible Motive to the duty of his Faith, has ſuperlative aſſurance conſpicuouſly aſſerted in the miraculous Conduct, Facts, and Munificence of the Almighty, without the help of Man as his ſubordinate Tutor; otherwiſe then as it is Imcumbent on the more aſſiduous diſcernments of ſome to remind others of the pious regard they ought to have to Works of the Almighty, ſo manifeſt to every Eye.

Whereas, other perſwaſions, together with their undiſcernable motives, or ſuppoſitious Doctrins, convey'd, and impos'd by the Intereſted diverſities of humane Allowance, make their obſcure Entrance into the Soul of the believer, and by their fermented oppoſitions inſtigate polemick Diſputes with ſuch dreadful Animoſities as patroniſe War and Deſtruction, whereby they may juſtly be deem'd, inſtead of Religions, the Incendiaries of violence and blood: Which ſanguine Impieties, or deſtroying of Lives on the account of conteſted or uncertain Tenents, are wholly avoided by the Principles of the *Theiſt*, no leſs Impoſſible to be oppos'd then if Men ſhould deny the Being of the miraculous World they Inhabit, or the

Gifts

Gifts of Providence which they have Eyes to behold.

But the *Theist* is not desirous farther to enlarge or apply, what might be said on this occasion, least he should provoke Men of words, or such that with more Passion then Sense, would be his wrangling opposers.

If he Affirms that the Universe is the mediate Object of his devotion to the Omnipotent; he does not therefore conclude that the World was produc'd or Man in it, as if any glory, by either, or both, could be added to God, who is Eternally glorified in himself; and not at all by constituting, in a direct Interpretation, the species of Mankind, so wickedly temper'd and compos'd in Body and Mind;

and with that generality too, that the Rolls of the Impious are numberleſs, in every conſideration, if compar'd with the few good: Inſomuch, that ſome have attributed the production of Man to an accidental aberration of Nature, in the Courſe of her Works; or her Ambition, by that Enormity, to raiſe humane Individuals that ſhould be wickedly predominant over themſelves and the reſt of her Creatures: Wherefore they conclude that Mankind had as corrupt a beginning as 'tis continu'd in too many notorious Examples of Life and Death: As alſo that they could not be Creatures allow'd by the Almighty to preſent him with the Addreſs of their praiſe or Prayer.

To

To which the *Theist* Replys, that it cannot be denied that the vast Troops of the Wicked abundantly over-number the Good; Notwithstanding, their facinourous Deeds abolish not the rational Capacities they have to amend, or to be inform'd by the discreet Integrity of the better principled few: So that 'tis either for want of diligent Instructors, or as they are not incourag'd, as they ought to be, in applying their assiduity to impress Divine Moralities; whereby multitudes might be render'd more propitiously devout; and therefore not meerly the natural Inclinations and Tempers of Men that causeth their averseness from Piety and Obedience.

And

And till Rulers of People are leſs blemiſh'd by their Principles and Actions, and more advantageous Examples of eminent Goodneſs to ſuch they govern, there will be but ſmall progreſs towards a general Redreſs: By reaſon that where Men can be beneficially countenanced in being bad, they will ſeldom Improve, by their worldly loſs, to the benefit of their Souls.

In fine, ſhould a Man, according to the laſt Inſtance, think himſelf beholding to his blind expreſſion of Nature for all; or what is more, be ſo ungratiouſly thoughtleſs as in no manner of notion to be thankfully accountable for his Being, or the benefits of Life enjoy'd by him: 'Tis very probable that ſuch a perſon, if mention'd to him, that it

muſt

muſt be ſome benegn Cauſe that had given him his Intellectual faculties above other Animals, and likewiſe capacities of Mind to ſubjugate them, in divers kinds, for his uſe and ſubſiſtance, would acknowledge, by ſome Denomination or Method, that he ought to give thanks, as well as pray that the Commodities of Life might be continu'd to him here, tho he believ'd nothing of a future World: And therefore deteſtable Inconſiderateneſs in ſuch as appear neither Proſelites to Reaſon, or Religion.

Others there are, and of acute perception, that want no diligence in obſerving the Divine Conduct and Order diffuſs'd throughout the Univerſe and all its Particulars: Who notwithſtanding

ſtanding their utmoſt endeavour, are at a ſtand, becauſe they Judge that they cannot diſcern in the open face of Providence other then the univerſality of temporary living and dying, with their appurtenancies, as they relate to every Individual of Life: And therefore conclude that Mortality is the total end of Mankind; there being nothing, as they conceive, in any method of Providence, that gives any aſſurance of ſurviving after Death, or apparent Being of Immortality.

But Men, of this genius, whilſt they imploy the inquiſitive ſubtilities of their Brain below themſelves, omit the Judgment they might receive from their Eyes in taking their proſpect upwards; by which they might viſibly apprehend that the Skies

are

are adorn'd with numberleſs Stars, that by no humane obſervation had ever any alteration, or periods Incident to diſſolution: And therefore ſo many admirable Emblems of the Immortality that has Being in them; as by the Eſſential proprieties of their Nature, Figure, Continuance, and Motion, is very manifeſt; and it has been pertinently prov'd, in the ſecond Particular of this Treatiſe, that a Thought of the Mind can reſemble, by ſuddain expedition, the ſwifteſt Acceleration of a Star: And may not therefore the Soul of Man, from whence ſuch Thought proceeds, be as Immortal as the brighteſt of the Orbs above.

And thus may be encourag'd the ſublime Hope that Mankind ought

ought to have of endless Life and Perfection; since by the Dispensation of the Almighty there is Immortality beheld in the Luminaries of Day and Night: And why the humane Soul should not be granted as capable of Everlasting subsistence is not to be disprov'd?.

Too many there are, that by their infamous Conversation and Lives are so far from meriting a mention in the refin'd List of Immortality, as they deserve not to enjoy the common benefits of worldly Life: Whilst in Soul they possess so uncomfortable a Being, that by Reason of their Impieties, 'tis their utmost wish that Mortality may be their Period. Wherefore they Judge that 'tis no Interest to their Lives to pray,

pray, unleſs their ſupplications might be admitted, whereby they would be exempted from Death, and continu'd as bad as they are; and ſo they are here left to themſelves, till they think fit to be better.

And now to conclude with the Method of the *Theiſt*'s Devotion, to which he conceives he has ſo many palpable motives from the bounties of the Almighty to the Life he poſſeſſeth, and whatſoever tends to his comfort in Body and Mind, that he were guilty, of a ſloathful Impiety, ſhould he not acknowledge his thankfulneſs with his daily Bread; and the more, becauſe frequently beſtow'd by the mercies of providence.

As to his manner of Prayer, the *Theiſt* affirms it inſeparably annexed

annexed to the Entireneſs of his Belief and Method of Devotion; which he conceives cannot have a more refin'd Evidence, than that it perfectly avoids all diſputable Commixture or Impurity from any Notions of Erronius Faith, or their Parcels of Belief complicated, or intermix'd with the diffus'd Creeds of ſome others: Wherefore he conſiders his Perſuaſion as an infallible Purity, or refin'd Nature of Belief, abſolutely concommitant with the Worſhip of one God, palpably Reveal'd in the ſtupendious Being of his Works, and the Conduct of Providence viſible in them; on which account, it is impoſſible to add, to ſo many Superlative Convictions of the Soul, any particular Article of Faith, that is leſs manifeſt, than the Miracles

of

of Omnipotency perſpicuouſly diſpers'd throughout the total Fabrick of the Univerſe, as it comprehends the Wonders beheld above and below.

And as Divine Admiration muſt neceſſarily produce Reverence from the humane Soul; 'tis no leſs undeniably conſequent, that an Eternal Conviction, by actual Wonders, is a Motive above all others, whereby is Effected the Piety of Devotion confirm'd by the barefac'd Miracles of the World, and its Univerſal Providence: On which *Baſis*, by the acknowledgment of the *Theiſt*, does conſiſt the common Place of his Religion, as has been precedently inſtanc'd.

If other Devotions have enlarg'd their Creeds beyond open Miracles, or as they were, in Effect, so many providential Proposals of Worship Universally Evident from the time that Mankind had Being in the World, the Progression of such Beliefs could have no other Rise then as they were suppos'd to be Reveal'd to particular Persons: And were more or less valu'd, by Men that duely consider'd the original Start, or Comencement of different Persuasions, as the Authors, or first Propagaters of them, were renown'd for extraordinary Prudence, Moralities of Life, and holy Conversation: Or signally Celebrated for miraculous Deeds conceiv'd to be produc'd by them; and consequently, by Education and Custome descended,

descended, so reputed, to Posterity.

Inumerable Examples might be given, of this kind, from undoubted Stories of Ages past; but none more remarkably Antient, or of longer continuance then the gross, or horrible Impiety, that Worshipt the Almighty in the Persons of Men; or, like to an Arithmetical Fraction of ½, divided Godship by conceiving it Infus'd into humane Body.

And thus did not a few of the Antients who attributed to heroick Persons, and famous Founders of pious Institutions and Precepts, the Titles of Demygods: Not as they believ'd them such, but as their Signal Exam-

ples, and Sacred Ordinations, could not have ſufficient Reputation without a ſublime Epithite: And the more pardonable in thoſe Authors, becauſe no better meanes was known to them whereby Mankind might be indued to Holy Obedience and the Sacred Duty that appertain to civil Society and Government.

But as the Intention might be, in ſome reſpects, pardonable, the Conſequence was highly pernitious to the Devotion and Peace of Men; as one fellow or other, in ſeveral Ages of the World, preſum'd to be Inſpir'd with Celeſtial Dictates: Or for more ſupreme Confirmation of his Doctrine attributed Divinity to himſelf; when he obſerv'd that

that Men were credulous enough to believe him.

But these could signifie no other then so many contriv'd Impostorages, and were by degrees, accordingly discover'd, as may be observ'd from Stories, with which the *Theist* does, in no kind, intermix Christianity; notwithstanding it has not that dateless Evidence, as to that Denomination, with his own: It being undeniable that the Belief of one God was a Primitive Motive that had its Original with the Being of the World, and therefore precedent to all subsequent Worships.

But since the Profession of Christianity was deliver'd by the

Preaching and Writings of Holy Perſons, who by the ſimplicity of their Lives and Converſation could have no ſuch Indirect Ends and Intereſts that might derogate from the aſſurance, conceiv'd by them, of whatſoever they Atteſted: The *Theiſt* does, no ways, detract from the Goodneſs of their Doctrine; and the rather becauſe it has an agreeable excellency with the manifeſt Text of Devine Providence.

For 'tis a Devine Chriſtian Moral, unparallel'd by other Perſuaſions, that good Deeds are to be done, for the ſake of Good, notwithſtanding the unworthineſs of the Receiver: So by the Conduct of Providence its Munificence is viſibly diffus'd

diffus'd to all Stations of Mankind, however defertleſly perceiv'd and injoy'd by them.

The Conſideration of which, together with the pious Examples, Reſignations in Spirit, and contempt of worldly advantages, Eminent in, not a few, Chriſtian Profeſſors, raiſeth no ſmall deſire, in the *Theiſt*, that he might Aſſociate with them in ſaying Almighty and moſt merciful Father: And conſequently that in his Judgment, next to the Belief of one God, Chriſtian Profeſſion ought to be Embrac'd before any other in the World.

And thus you have a Summary of the moſt pertinent Science, and Tenents applica-

ble to the Doctrine of *Theiſme*, not hitherto devulg'd, as alſo its Tendency to the Improvement of Holy Religion and Practice.

FINIS.

Poſtſcript.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE main Intention of this Treatise has, like the Figure of *Janus*, two Faces: By the one, of which, the Reader may take a backward prospect of such prophane Superstitions and Worships as were frequent in the Traditions and Writings of the Antients; some of which are particularly mention'd in this Book: Together with others, better known, then readily number'd; yet so display'd that their Errors and Absurdities are totally render'd Inconsistent with the superlative Conviction which the Providence of the Almighty has visibly convey'd to Humane Understanding.

But such has been the gross Neglect, or Supidity in Men, that they have perversly applyed the Devotion of their Souls, rather to the artful Insinuations of Counterfeit Tenents, then to the sincere

eere and palpable acknowledgment that there is Deity from what every common Eye may discern in the vast Theatre of his Works that contains Innumerable Scenes of manifest Wonders that could have no other Author then one Omnipotent.

The other signal Part, if not the most useful, was so to introduce Atheisme on the publick Stage, that it might have a reproachful and full defeat from the Demonstration of a God, by the Doctrine of the *Theist*; no less prospicuously discernable then that Mankind, with whatsoever is besides in the Compass of the Universe, are, by Divine appointment, under a miraculous Conduct.

Notwithstanding however powerful those Motives, the *Atheist* to cover his supine disregard of all such conspicuous and sublime Evidences that ought to be undeniably Attributed to the Ordination, Management, and Power of a deified Author, seems to acquiesce in what he terms Nature; and to which obscure Denomination he endeavours to annex the total sum of his Infidelity, by urging that whatsoever has Being above, or below, have an ordinary and natural Subsistency

Subſiſtency from the Method of Cauſes and Effects.

Tho he cannot deny that, by ſo affirming, he is enforc'd to grant that this Empreſs of the Univerſe, which he calls Nature, is not Intellegible by any rational Definition of the Word, or any Proprieties he Attributes to her; becauſe it is not poſſible for him to give any original Account either of the Natural Being of Man, Animal, or Vegetable: Or when the Sun and Stars began firſt to ſhine, for Univerſal Benefit; no more then he is certainly able to tell what a Clock 'twas before he was born.

Too many there are that, if but Entertain'd with Tales of Magick, Witchcraft, or the devices and feats of a Jugler, tho a deſpicable Impoſter, will not only incline to believe them, but heartily wiſh they might behold ſuch Imaginary Facts perform'd, which but related they deem ſupernatural Wonders.

But were the ſame Perſons Interogated, whether, by any of their Senſes, they as eaſily were charm'd by the miraculous Conſtitution of the Univerſe and all it Circumſcribs, 'tis to be doubted that

that not a few of them would with the common *Atheist* reply, that although divers Existencies and Operations, in the World they behold, appear stupendiously wonderful, yet, as they consider them as things of Course, they could not Judge them so extraordinary as the Miracles they had heard of, but for ought they could prove, were never perform'd; which Imbecillities, in humane Comprehension, proceed from no other Fond then want of Judicious Consideration, or not being pertinently Instructed by Superiors.

Should it be demanded, by the Reader, why Texts of Holy Scripture, or Arguments from Venerable Writers have not been more frequently Cited then are to be found in the precedent Book; the Answer, that can most properly be given, is, that the Authors design was barely to Convict the *Atheist*, by proofs Inserted, whereby the open Evidence of *Theisme*, in the Belief of one God, without other Divine Testimonial, or Article of Faith, might be ascertain'd to the clearest Eye of the Intellect: Not but all necessary Texts, of Holy Writ, are thereby effectually Imply'd, as is

no

no less perspicuously discernable from the demonstrative Parts of this Treatise, then if pronounc'd with the Psalmist, *That the Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy Work.*

Nor can the *Atheist*, if not obdurately such, be by any other process so readily Convicted: As he that may probably expend his Faith to the Belief of an Infinite Power and Being, from Actual and Visible Miracles that could be produc'd no otherwise then by an Omnipotent Author; Will not so easily devote his Assent to the most celebrated Authority of any Writing, however Divine it ought to be understood.

'Tis reported of the Philosopher *Aristotle*, tho far different in Opinion from the obstinacy of the Antient, or Modern *Atheist*, that he having perus'd the Books of *Moses*, his Judgment of them was that they had in them the voice of God, tho otherwise nothing was prov'd by them: But had that great Man of Science throughly consider'd what might have been affirm'd suitable to what is sufficiently Demonstrated in this Work; he

he would have at leaſt declar'd for the Doctrine of *Theiſme*.

But ſuch is the inveterate Impudence and *Odium* that too many, in our days, have againſt Holy Belief, of whatſoever Denomination, that it is their Luxury to cabal for *Atheiſme* and *Prophaneneſs*, as they mingle thoſe Impieties with their Wine and Mirth; by which they would aſcribe to themſelves the Title of Wits, however wickedly Principled, or ſo fooliſhly Impious that they reſiſt the Dictates of Senſe: As if they had Reſolvedly confin'd their Souls to ſuch a narrowneſs of Conception that the broadeſt Miracles of Divine Providence were not to operate on their underſtandings.

But 'tis hop'd, if they ſhall pleaſe, with any reaſonable diſcretion, to Inſpect the Subſtance of this Book, that there Infidility, together with their Debaucheries of Life, will be ſo far Reform'd as that they will approve themſelves better Subjects, in their Duties to Heaven and Earth, then hitherto they have been.